

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH, PHD

Banner Code: HH-PHD-HSR

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Website: <https://chhs.gmu.edu/students/academic-advising/graduate-advising#hap>

The purpose of the PhD program in Health Services Research is to prepare graduates to be scholars, educators, researchers, and leaders in higher education, health care and service organizations, health care consulting firms, government and nonprofit organizations, and private businesses that support or regulate the health service industry.

The degree has the following two specialized programs of study (concentrations):

- Health Systems and Policy
- Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Requirements

Students must have a master's degree or other advanced degree (i.e., MD, JD, PhD or equivalent) from a regionally-accredited institution before being admitted to the 72-credit PhD program.

Applicants must meet the admission standards and application requirements specified in Graduate Admissions and must apply using the online Application for Graduate Admission (<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid>). For application deadlines and detailed application requirements, refer to the CHHS Admissions website (<http://chhs.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate/deadlines.cfm>).

Policies

Reduction of Credit

Students who enter with a master's or other advanced degree may have the credit requirement reduced by up to 30 credits (to a minimum of 42) for previous coursework that closely corresponds with doctoral program requirements. The credit reduction decision will be made by the doctoral program coordinator and requires approval of the department chair. Requests for reduction of credit are reviewed only after acceptance to the doctoral program.

Time Requirements

Students must complete all requirements for the PhD in Health Services Research within 9 calendar years from the time of first enrollment as a doctoral student in the program or with provisional status. PhD students are expected to progress steadily toward their degree and to complete all coursework and the written exam in order to advance to candidacy within no more than 6 years.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 72

Core Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Research and Computational Methods Domain		
HAP 719	Advanced Statistics in Health Services Research I	3
HAP 760	Philosophy of Science in Health Services Research	3
HAP 819	Advanced Statistics in Health Services Research II	3
HAP 835	Causal Inference in Health Services Research	3
Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics Domain		
HAP 709	Health Care Databases	3
HAP 720	Health Data Integration	3
HAP 780	Data Mining in Health Care	3
Health Systems and Policy Domain		
HAP 715	Health Economics	3
HAP 742	Health Policy Development and Analysis	3
HAP 868	Advanced Research Seminar in Health Policy Analysis	3
Total Credits		30

Concentration and Electives

Students take additional courses in one of two concentration domains: Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics or Health Systems and Policy. Doctoral-level electives outside of CHHS or concentration-related content areas may be taken as approved by the student's academic advisor. A maximum of 6 credits of 600-level courses may be applied to the degree.

Concentration in Knowledge Discovery and Health Informatics (KDHI)

Code	Title	Credits
Thirty credits from the following:		
HAP 618	Computational Tools in Health Informatics	
HAP 701	Health Data: Vocabulary and Standards	
HAP 730	Health Care Decision Analysis	
HAP 745	Health Care Security Policy	
HAP 752	Advanced Health Information Systems	
HAP 770	Medical Decision Making and Decision Support Systems	
HAP 823	Comparative Effectiveness Analysis using Observational Data	
HAP 925	Advanced Methods in Qualitative Research for Health Care	

GCH 807	Measurement Theories and Applications in Health Care Research	
RHBS 720	Principles of Clinical Trials	
RHBS 816	Rehabilitation Efficacy and Effectiveness Research	
STAT 663	Statistical Graphics and Data Exploration I	
STAT 763	Statistical Graphics and Data Exploration II	
CSI 873	Computational Learning and Discovery	
Other course(s) supporting the student's subject matter or research methods, as approved by the advisor		
Total Credits		30

Concentration in Health Systems and Policy (HSYP)

Code	Title	Credits
Thirty credits from the following:		30
HAP 645	Introduction to Health Services Research	
HAP 661	Policy Development and Analysis for Community Health Programs	
HAP 662	Health Policy for Elders and People with Disabilities	
HAP 704	Contemporary Issues in Health Systems Management	
HAP 745	Health Care Security Policy	
HAP 746	Health Policy Leadership	
HAP 762	Cost-Effectiveness for Health Care Management and Policy Decisions	
HAP 823	Comparative Effectiveness Analysis using Observational Data	
HAP 925	Advanced Methods in Qualitative Research for Health Care	
GCH 807	Measurement Theories and Applications in Health Care Research	
RHBS 816	Rehabilitation Efficacy and Effectiveness Research	
Other course(s) supporting the student's subject matter or research methods, as approved by the advisor		
Total Credits		30

Comprehensive Exams

Two comprehensive examinations (one written and one either oral or computational) will determine whether the student has the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake dissertation work. (Note: A computational exam presents the student with a question that requires analysis of data in order to provide a comprehensive answer.) The comprehensive exams must be taken within one year of completion of all coursework (except for dissertation sequence courses).

Students shall indicate by the end of the previous regular semester their intent to take the comprehensive exams. Students must have organized a dissertation committee with a chair approved by the HSR PhD Program Director. The dissertation committee will develop and evaluate the individual's comprehensive exams on a pass/no-pass basis. Students must pass both exams to enter PhD candidacy. Students who fail to pass either of the comprehensive exams may attempt each exam again the following semester. No more than one additional attempt at the exams will be permitted. Students who do not pass both comprehensive

exams after the maximum number of attempts will be dismissed from the program.

Written Comprehensive Exam

Members of the dissertation committee will utilize a written comprehensive examination to assess the student's ability to apply theoretical concepts of research design and methods (including study design, data acquisition or collection, data management, analysis and interpretation) to relevant research questions in the student's concentration and area of research.

Oral or Computational Comprehensive Exam

Members of the dissertation committee will utilize either an oral or a computational comprehensive examination to assess the student's knowledge of theory and application pertaining to the content of the "field" and relevant subject matter, based upon the student's concentration and areas of research.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students who pass the comprehensive exams and all core and concentration course requirements advance to candidacy. A student must advance to candidacy status before taking the dissertation courses.

Dissertation Sequence Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Complete at least 12 credits:		12
HAP 998	Doctoral Dissertation Proposal	
HAP 999	Doctoral Dissertation (at least 6 credits)	
Total Credits		12

Dissertation

After advancement to candidacy, the HSR PhD student must complete an approved dissertation. The student must seek and obtain the approval of the HSR PhD Program Director on the selection of his/her Dissertation Chair and committee members. The committee must have at least three members, each of which must be a full-time member of the graduate faculty. The Chair must hold an appointment in the Department of Health Administration and Policy (HAP) and be approved by the Program Director. The second member of the dissertation committee must be a member of either the HAP Department or the College of Health and Human Services, and the third member of the committee must be from the College or other academic unit at George Mason University. A fourth member of the committee may be appointed, from another academic unit or from outside Mason, with the approval of the Program Director.

Within six months of passing the comprehensive examinations, the student must submit a draft dissertation proposal to the Dissertation Chair and committee. The proposal shall describe the proposed research as directed by the Chair and Committee. Failure to submit the proposal in a timely manner is grounds for academic probation. The proposal must provide a detailed literature review that provides the context and rationale for the research objectives, state the dissertation objective(s), and describe the proposed study design and analytic methods. The proposal must address the feasibility of completing the dissertation research and state the chair and members of the student's dissertation committee (with signatures or other appropriate documentation through e-mail) and include a short rationale for the inclusion of each member. An oral proposal defense must be scheduled with dissertation committee members who have agreed to serve. During the oral proposal defense, the student will describe their proposed research and address questions by the committee members. At the oral defense, the Dissertation Committee determines approval or disapproval of the proposal. Committee

disapproval is accompanied by written recommendations for improving the proposed research with expectations for resubmission.